



PSC NEWS

Missouri Public Service Commission

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PSC FILES PROPOSED TELECOMMUNICATIONS RULE REVISIONS

Jefferson City (January 30, 2004)---Telecommunications companies operating in Missouri would be required to clearly identify the exact name and rates associated with a calling plan or package under proposed rules filed by the Public Service Commission with the Secretary of State.

“Consumers have the right to know exactly what they are purchasing from a telecommunications provider. If a service plan offering contains a specific rate in its title, that is the rate that a consumer should expect to be charged if they sign up for that plan,” stated PSC Chairman Steve Gaw.

This proposed rule is one of several the Commission is reviewing as it considers modifying its telecommunications rules and regulations regarding service and billing practices for telecommunications providers in Missouri.

“We welcome public comment on these proposed rule revisions and hope the public will participate in this process,” stated Chairman Gaw.

Anyone may file a statement in support of or in opposition to the proposed rules. Those comments should be sent to the Secretary of the Missouri Public Service Commission, P.O. Box 360, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102, (573) 751-3234. To be considered, comments (in Case No. TX-2001-512) must be received within 30 days after publication of notice in the Missouri Register. A public hearing is scheduled on these proposed rules on April 23, 2004, in Room 310 of the Governor Office Building (200 Madison Street) in Jefferson City.

There are a number of proposed rule revisions regarding telecommunications providers. Some of those proposed revisions include:

*Requiring that all bills clearly identify the company name associated with the toll free number that a customer will be calling for bill inquiries and/or to cancel their previously granted consent to certain services that will be charged on the telephone bill.

*Providing that tariffs on file with the Commission have the name of the service, clearly identifying the regulated intrastate offering, as it is advertised and offered to the customer; a detailed description of the service offered; the specific rates and charges and the period of time covered by the rate or charge; and any terms and customer requirements that affect the rates or charges for the service.

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* Requiring that all telecommunications companies, including price cap companies, provide notice to their customers if they are proposing to increase rates for a regulated telecommunications service.

*Requiring that each bill clearly state the amount due for basic local telephone service, including any amount due for service bundles that include basic local service.

*Permitting basic local service to be disconnected for non-payment of the Missouri Universal Service fund surcharge.

*Requiring that upon a request from the customer, the telecommunications provider is to provide, some at a cost to the consumer, various blocking services for: all 900 numbers from that customer's number; all calls from state correctional facilities to that customer's number; all toll calls without a valid passcode from that customer's number; and all calls using a 10-10-XXX dialing pattern from that customer's number. In addition, customers would be notified of this availability on an annual basis.

*Requiring that when service is established, information provided by telecommunications providers must contain information on Lifeline and Link-Up service offerings.